

## Beautification Commission (BC)

Meeting Minutes

May 14th, 2012

Town Hall Room B-3

**Present:** Suzanne Schutte, Heather Pommernelle, Sandy Drimal, Bob Baker, John Schlachtenhaufen, Phyllis Hawkins, Cindy Ryan, Marcia Meinerth, David May, Sabina Harris, Sandy Filmer, Pam Elliot

**Absent:** Sig Buchmayr.

Action items are noted in red.

### Financial

- Financial review. Over \$9.9m in budget to date. Expenditures anticipated to amount to \$8.3m, leaving \$1.3m thru June 30<sup>th</sup>. Hanging baskets amount (\$3.4m) included in this number and have been paid for.
- Special Acct; \$1.3m in special acct with contribution (\$1.2m) from B. Castle totals \$2.5m. AAG payments will increase amount in special acct. as these payments trickle in to Marcia.
- Elder Santiago. Group agreed to use Elder going forward for watering, pruning, fertilizing of hanging baskets, and watering and pruning of Adopt-A-Gardens. He is insured. Group agreed to offer Complete Designs some work, as it's short notice that we're not using them; **specific projects to be identified by SS/HP/CR.**
- BC would need to provide the water tank for Elder for the watering. DPW has one; **SS to discuss with them**, or whether BC would need to purchase a tank for his truck.
- Charitable Contribution from Burma Castle estate. Received \$1,206 thus far. SS has sent all donors a thank you letter from BC.
- **HP to submit something to the paper thanking the estate and their donors.**

### Spring Clean-Up held April 28<sup>th</sup>

- SS confirmed that slightly over 200 volunteers participated! Types of trash – Overall, 204 plastic bags were picked up in all areas of Darien; Pear Tree Point collected 12 bags of trash; 70lbs of garbage was picked up at the Hindley School property. SS wrote letters and submitted them to both papers.

### Hanging Baskets, to arrive 5/24

- SD updated the group. DPW will have 2 men. **All who can help hang baskets should meet at 7:30am at Goodwives Shopping Center, bring wire cutters.**

### Adopt-A-Spot, mailers

- SF sent out mailers to reconfirm the 22 locations, all covered.

### Adopt-A-Gardens (AAGs)

- MM is now sending out the AAG invoices. She plans to adjust billing to match our fiscal year, so invoices would go out in June. **Will update status at next meeting.**
- CR/HP – of the AAGs that we clean - all have been recently been tidied, they look good, with the exception of exit 11 where grasses need to be cut back.
- CR/HP – of the AAGs that sponsors tend, those at Goodwives & Jim McNaughton don't look cared for. **CR & HP to check gardens**, if neglected the garden can be reassigned.
- Potential sponsor for Exit 13/Welcome to Darien garden. CR updated that it's not going through.
- Possible new AAG, corner of Tilley Pond & new Lanphier Day Spa across from Darien Train Station. **CR discussing with potential sponsor.**
- **HP to write article promoting AAGs to submit to the papers.** Will highlight key available AAGs – Darien train station, Exit 13, CVS, entrance island to Noroton Heights station, intersection of Old Kings Highway South & Tokeneke Road.

### Other Clean-up locations

- DOT discussion with Jim Barnes on state property clean-ups (eg Entrance to I-95N, exit 11, near Darien Animal Hospital + Exit 12). These didn't happen when he was in town. Point added to cleaning up – paint the Noroton Height bridge. **JS to follow up.**
- Exit 12 (vine removal, planting). If permission granted from DOT, SS will send letter to request donations towards this project from Zotos and Colangelo.
- Girl Scout planting at the Darien Train Station. SS/HP are working with them on plant selection. They're now finalizing which plants they want and budget. They'll likely be fundraising at the station.

- Noroton Height garden/DPW project - SS/CR/HP. DPW cleared the area at Jayme's request, then asked BC for help with design. All shrubs from the berm were moved to the left side of the train station entrance. DPW to mulch and water.
- Group discussed how clean-up projects around town are determined. **SS to contact Jamie Stevenson to discuss establishing a priority list, to coordinate with DPW.**

#### The Berm Project

- The first order of plants has DM organized 3 big work sessions – April 28<sup>th</sup> DHS high school students & BC members cleaned the area, May 9<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> BC members finished cleaning and planting all first shipment plants that were large enough to plant. DM is potting up small plants to grow on. Nothing being held at Wee Burn yet.
- DM stressed that watering is now the key to plant survival – they're quite small, so we will have dead plants if a session is missed. Watering on a given day will likely take 1 hour for one person. **DM to create BC watering schedule for members to sign up. At the close of this meeting, JS to show BC members the hose set-up for watering the berm.**
- There will be a lot of weeding this first year – may need to use Elder. DM requested mulch from DPW for the bottom of the slope, piled for BC members to spread. **SS to request.**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> lot of plants expected to arrive in early July.
- Tree planting at the berm - JS. 4 trees have been picked out – October Glory Maple, 2 Service Berries, & a Black Gum. DPW's help needed to handle off planting the trees. **SS to speak to DPW.**
- **SS to also ask DPW to move the boulders from the berm** (they're not part of the design).

#### Illegal Lawn Signs

- Update on sign proposal for the RTC & DTC - BB. No response yet; **BB to send another letter** stressing that he's just asking them to abide by the existing town regulations.
- Website wording – no feedback yet. **BB to include result of RTC/DTC discussions once finalized.**

#### Other

- David Fletcher has offered a beautiful red maple that has to be removed from his property. **SS to ask DPW to replant it**, possibly to behind the 'Welcome to Darien' sign at exit 13.
- Garbage cans are not available from DPW.

Next Meeting June 11th, 9am Town Hall Room B-3